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MOTHER EARTH

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OBSERVATIONS AND COMMENTS

Samuel Gompers, writing in the *American Federationist*, regrets the growing custom among workingmen of spending Labor Day at picnics and in general jollification. He calls upon the unions to devote the day to demonstrations, reminding them of the "serious meaning of the holiday." Gompers should know, however, that Labor Day lost its serious meaning when it became legalized. The day chosen by workingmen to express their hopes and aspirations was emasculated by receiving plutocratic sanction. And it is Gompers and consorts, preaching the lie of "identical interests of employer and employee," that are responsible for this.

Workingmen of revolutionary spirit know that the first of May—not the capitalistically legalized holiday—is the true Labor Day. They know that labor demonstrations can have but one rational object: to unify labor and to remind the exploiters of the power of labor. But when the spirit of solidarity and co-operation and, above all, of conscious class interests is lacking, such demonstrations are a hollow mockery.

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The mollycoddle attitude of Gompers's organization, the Central Federated Union, in regard to the recent ukase of Commissioner Bingham, is disgraceful and disgusting. "Red flags prohibited," read the police order. Upon inquiry from the C. F. U., the Commissioner kindly explained that the new order was due to the dis-

play of red flags at the first of May demonstration—a spectacle which, the police say, aroused the indignation and fears of "good, respectable" citizens. Bingham condescended, however, to permit the unions to carry in the parade flags they had used for many years at similar occasions.

It is characteristic of the spirit of the Central Federated Union—supposedly representing the "dignity of labor" —that not a single delegate had the manhood to protest against the unwarranted interference of the Chief Policeman in the affairs of labor.

Has labor—the giant that feeds and supports the world—so little spirit, so little appreciation of its importance, as to be cowed by a policeman, or to be influenced by the exploiters' fear of the red flag?

And what will capital, so easily terrorized by the mere sight of a red rag, feel when the black flag of hunger is unfurled in the streets?!

* * *

A capital joke was perpetrated by Yellow Hearst on Labor Day. As a sign of his special sympathy with labor he published a cable from the Pope to Archbishop Farley. In his message the Pope appeals to the American workingman to follow in the footsteps of Jesus, by practicing the divine example of "sweet toil." Not a bad idea, indeed. As is well known, the Carpenter of Nazareth never did any carpentering, preferring to tramp with Mary Magdalene. But what relation is there between the alleged "sweet toil of Jesus" and the parasitic lives of priests, cardinals and popes?

* * *

Religious publications of various denominations are busily discussing the question as to why religion is suffering such perceptible weakening of its power of attraction.

We make bold to suggest that the explanation might be found in the fact that mankind is gradually beginning to realize that the Church has become a mere business, which exposes in its show windows shoddy wares at exorbitant prices.

True, the Church preaches to-day, as of old, the gospel of renunciation—for the poor; yet she herself renounces

neither secular power nor earthly possessions; on the contrary, she is eternally striving to have and to rule.

In the pursuit of her aims she combines and co-operates with the possessors, the rich. She fought their battles and preached humility to the subjects of princes, and the divine right of rulers to punish and murder. The serfs of the nobles she counseled to be content with their misery and bondage. To-day she preaches to the helots of field and factory patience to carry their heavy cross.

The Church is the agency of plutocracy; the latter employs priests for the same reason that it hires Pinkertons. Both agencies serve the same purpose: to perpetuate the slavery of the masses.

Many already understand this; unfortunately, not yet everybody. But it accounts for the fact that the churches constantly grow more empty, which is a hopeful sign.

* * *

R. A. Pinkerton, plutocracy's bloodhound, died a few days ago. He was the original desirable citizen. It is understood that the acquittal of Haywood broke his tender heart.

* * *

The labor mis-leaders now state that the strike of the commercial telegraphers has entered "the phase of endurance." In plain English it means that the telegraphers will win their strike when the telegraph companies will have been—starved into submission!

It is enough to state the proposition to expose its ridiculousness. As long as labor permits capital to grow fat on its toil, the employers are in no immediate danger of starvation. But the striking workingman *is*. The employers have learned the lesson of co-operation. The workingmen *have not*.

Were labor really in earnest about starving its exploiters into submission, there would be no more exploiters. And if the strikers were as sensible as they are hungry, they would not sit supinely at home "awaiting developments." The inevitable "developments" of such an imbecile attitude spell defeat. But if, instead of relying on the miraculous power of their "leaders" and on conferences with the enemy, the commercial telegraphers had tried to help themselves; if they had made their strike

a real strike; if they had organized a complete, general tie-up by calling to aid *all* union operators, then the telegraphic companies and the public at large would have speedily realized that the strikers are earnest and determined men. And such men always win.

But that means direct action and general strike! What would the mis-leaders say—the traitors who had doomed the strike in its inception by their cowardly opposition.

* * *

John F. Gaynor, a Federal prisoner, has been permitted by Attorney General Bonaparte to take a trip to a health resort, in company with his wife and valet.

Gaynor is the New York contractor who was convicted with Benjamin Green and Captain Oberlin Carter of stealing several millions of dollars in connection with the Savannah harbor contracts.

It is officially explained that Gaynor's "health is bad." Is every prisoner of failing health permitted to drive to the ball games, visit health resorts and have his wife and valet with him? I was not. Perhaps the right answer is to be found in Gaynor's thriftiness: he saved the money he stole. Now he uses it.

Prisons are the models of capitalism.

* * *

Two international gatherings have recently taken place: the Social Democratic Congress at Stuttgart, Germany, and the Conference of revolutionary Socialists and Anarchists at Amsterdam, Holland.

Characteristic of the spirit of the Social Democrats was the exclusion of English delegates representing organizations which do not believe in the political swindle.

The anti-militaristic proposal to the effect that, in case of war—as between Germany and France, for instance—the workingmen of both countries should make common cause and voice their protest by a general strike, was voted down as "inopportune." The Stuttgart Congress marks the final evolution of the Social Democrats into a bourgeois political party, pure and simple. The workingman can expect nothing from that quarter.

As to the Anarchist Conference, *Mother Earth* will publish original reports from Amsterdam, by Emma

Goldman. In the meantime we bring our comrade's first letter, written immediately after the opening of the Conference.

* * *

The capitalist press could not forego the opportunity of circulating the ancient bomb-and-dagger lie in connection with the Anarchist gathering at Amsterdam. The New York *Times* took special pains to inform its readers that "Emma Goldman made a violent speech at Amsterdam, urging a reign of terror as a means of readjusting social conditions in the United States."

In reply, I sent the following letter to the *Times,* published in its issue of August 29th:

"To the Editor of the New York *Times:*

It is, no doubt, very desirable for a newspaper to print exclusive news. The sine qua non, however, is—or should be—that the news be reliable, based on facts. News means information as to recent facts. A falsehood, no matter how "recent," is not news. Webster calls it a lie.

In the class of lies belongs the piece of "news" in yesterday's *Times,* to the effect that Emma Goldman, addressing the Amsterdam International Anarchist Conference, "urged a reign of terror as a means of readjusting social conditions in the United States."

You may not know it, but every citizen of average intelligence does know that Emma Goldman is too intelligent a woman to believe that social conditions could be readjusted by a reign of terror. A goodly number of your readers have, no doubt, heard Emma Goldman lecture at one time or another; or, perhaps they have heard other Anarchist lecturers and read Anarchist literature. And all of them know that they had never heard an Anarchist advocate a reign of terror to change social conditions. Nor have they ever heard or read any Anarchist advocacy of violence of any kind. On the contrary, many of your readers could inform you that Anarchism means the negation of violence; that Anarchists consider existing social conditions the reflex of existing false ideas, and, as such, to be combated by enlightenment and education, and not by a reign of terror; that, finally, Anarchists teach self-reliance, co-operation and mutual aid, in opposition to the existing institutions of authority and suppression, which are based on economic violence.

All this, and more, your readers could teach you. But are you really as stupid as you write?

ALEXANDER BERKMAN."

THE SITUATION IN AMERICA

[Report to the International Anarchist Conference at Amsterdam, 1907.]

PROPERLY speaking, there is no American Nation; what is usually called by that name is a conglomeration of members of all European nations, with a considerable proportion of Asiatic and African races. The ancestors of even the "genuine" Americans were themselves immigrants three or four generations back. It is due to the continual stream of immigration that the population of the United States has grown, in a comparatively short time, to eighty millions.

Between 1904 and 1905 the number of immigrants exceeded one million, the greatest proportion of which came from Russia, Italy and Austria-Hungary, while immigration from Germany, Ireland and Scandinavia decreased in comparison with former years.

The United States have ceased, to a certain extent, to attract the free, independent elements of Europe. The reason is quite apparent: plutocratic tyranny, aided by the political and judicial forces of the government, has proved itself no less brutal than the existing régimes of the old world. Equally repelling to the intelligent classes of Europe are the cold puritanism and formal piety dominant here, which have converted the country into a rich pasture for Pharisees and religious speculators.

The main attraction for immigration is a material one, wages being somewhat higher in comparison with European standards.

We have referred above to the fact that America has ceased to attract the free, independent elements of Europe. The only exception, however, is Russia, emigration from which country is the direct result of the unspeakable oppression and tyrannical persecution of the progressive elements of that country. They stream into the United States by the hundred thousands, to escape the Tsar's Black Hundreds and the pogroms.

The roseate hopes of the immigrants in numerous cases prove a severe disappointment. True, remuneration for labor is higher here than in Europe; on the other hand, however, the cost of living is also correspondingly higher.

The great mass of industrial workers are condemned to the life of a wage-slave, vegetating in conditions closely approaching barrack life. In certain industrial centers the very houses occupied by the workers belong to their employers,—a circumstance which gives the latter a terrible advantage over the workers and a weapon to be used, in the form of eviction, in times of strikes and lock-outs. Other industries are cursed by the company stores, an institution which serves to perpetuate the dependence of the worker upon his employer, and which represents the worst form of exploitation. The workers of an industrial center, living on the land and in the houses owned by their employers, and forced to buy all the necessaries of life in the company store (owned by the same employer) are thus absolutely at the mercy of their exploiters, who generally manage to get back through the company store every dollar paid out in wages. In certain coal mining districts, for instance, this exploitation of the worker in his two-fold capacity as producer and consumer has reached such enormity that in many cases the miner, at the end of a working year, finds himself the debtor of his employer.

These conditions, coupled with the brutally arrogant and irresponsible character of the American employers—as a class—have developed a situation closely approaching middle-age feudalism. The large industrial employers—be they trusts, millionaires, or United States Senators—are veritable lords, whose employees are regarded and treated as mere slaves, created for the special purpose of accumulating wealth without participation in its blessings. These conditions can be explained by the fact that a great number of the most important industries are localized outside the large cities; thus the employer is the practical owner of the whole industrial center, the inhabitants of which—consisting almost exclusively of the workers and their families—are his absolute dependents; they work in the mills and factories of their employer, they live on his land and in the houses which are his property, and they are, finally, forced to patronize his stores, as there are no others in the vicinity.

This intensive economic pressure is to a great extent responsible for the passivity and lack of interest in modern ideas which we meet with in the great industrial centers.

The revolutionary propaganda here encounters its greatest obstacle in the slavish spirit which permeates the entire population of this suffocating atmosphere. What further militates against the success of our agitation is the almost Babylonian confusion of speech in these centers. The multiplicity of languages and the consequent lack of mutual understanding keep the workers separated, to the great satisfaction of the plutocracy. This isolation of the various nationalities is responsible for the lack of solidaric feeling and action. Thus it can be seen that it is pure hypocrisy on the part of the employers when they "patriotically" shout against unlimited immigration. The American exploiter is the most greedy in the world; he is heartily in favor of immigration *en masse;* it supplies him with cheap labor and with material for strike-breaking; it enables him to foster race prejudice, to encourage strife among the workers, and to play the unintelligent element against the more conscious and intelligent, thus conserving the low level of the American proletariat. The national glorification of the wonderful American industries is an empty patriotic boast; the real producers are to a very large extent immigrant proletarians. The more illiterate and spiritless the latter are when they come to America, the lower their standard of living, the better pleased are the American industrial kings.

False inducements are held out to the potential immigrants by the press and other agencies of the exploiters. American conditions are pictured to them in rosy colors. They are impressed with the notion of how easy it is to acquire property and a home in the new world. This notion results in numbers of immigrants becoming victims of land sharks, who rob them of their last possessions: the captains of industry have, by the aid of corrupt legislation, long since accomplished the converting of the vast American territory into private property. There is no more "free land" to be had. It has already become a monopoly of State and Capital. Especially have the railroad companies enriched themselves by these land steals.

Were it necessary to adduce any justification for the propaganda of Anarchist Communism, conditions in America supply them. The beginning was made by the Christians, greedy of the new continent, despoiling the

American Indian, whose ownership of land was communistic. In a comparatively short time, the country in all its vast extent has become the prey of the monopolists, who partitioned the area among themselves. True, there still remain vast tracts not under cultivation; but even these are the private property of somebody, to which no workingman can lay claim as his home. The workingmen are living in crowded tenement houses, with neither sufficient air nor space, under the worst sanitary conditions, the wage slaves of their industrial masters.

* * *

The remarkable development of the mechanical arts in the United States has been revolutionary in its effect upon the economic conditions of the country. The immediate result of that development has been two-fold: First, an almost infinitesimal division of labor, undreamt of before the invention of modern machinery; secondly, the resultant practical abolition of skilled labor. Capital did not fail to quickly foresee the advantages of this unprecedented mechanical development and, consistently with its nature, has practically monopolized all the benefits accruing from the same. The necessity for skilled labor being reduced to a minimum, capital has grown even more independent and arrogant, realizing that—especially on the occasion of strikes—the former skilled labor can be replaced by cheaper unskilled labor. 'Tis the irony of capitalistic civilization that the blessings of man's inventive genius result to the detriment of the people at large. But the saddest feature of our mechanical age is to be found in the "industrializing" of the woman and child, whom the curse of capitalism forces to come into competition with their brothers and fathers, thus intensifying the economic struggle, with the resultant lowering of the national standard, economically, intellectually and socially.

The boasted independence and freedom of the American woman, so much prated about at home and abroad, consist essentially in her forced "liberty" to join the ranks of the men as a fellow wage slave, to the detriment of both. For whether she does a man's work or less, she is never his economic equal in point of remuneration. She comes in direct competition with man in practically

all professions and trades, even supplanting him entirely in some of them. The direct result is the lowering of the economic standard and the increase in the number of the unemployed. Considerations of national well-being do not trouble the beast of capitalism: the health of our future mothers is a matter of no consequence in the eternal dance around the golden calf. And it goes without saying that our legislatures and Congress are in perfect accord with the plutocracy, even to the extent of declaring unconstitutional the law against women working overtime. Naturally, the "liberty" of the exploiter to convert women's blood and bodies into profits must not be interfered with.

The crowning shame of the typically American brand of civilization is the employment of children of tender age in mines, factories and sweatshops. Recent investigations have disclosed a terrible condition: children of the age of five and six years are regularly employed in workshops, toiling long hours under the most unsanitary and vile surroundings, their wages being merely nominal. These terrible conditions have at last aroused public sentiment, resulting in a great anti-child-labor movement which could probably accomplish some effective reform, but for the deplorable near-sighted policy which has selected the crooked path of politics for its activities.

(To be continued.)

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OUR AMSTERDAM LETTER

Comrades:—I am writing in great haste, in order that my letter may reach *Mother Earth* before the September issue goes to press.

The International Anarchist Congress—the first ever held without molestation from the authorities—opened with a large meeting Sunday afternoon, August 25th. The gathering was addressed by the following speakers: Dr. Friedeberg, in German; Enrico Malatesta, in Italian; R. de Marmande, in French; P. Ramus, in German; Rogdaeff, in Russian; Christian Cornelissen, in Dutch; and myself, in English.

To-day, August 26th, after wasting considerable time in unnecessary preliminaries, began the reading of the various reports on the present condition of the Anarchist movement in Germany, France, Belgium, Holland, Bohemia, Switzerland, Italy, Servia, Russia and the United States. As all the reports will no doubt be published, I shall merely say for the present that we have learned many interesting features of our movement, which I will discuss in the next issue of *Mother Earth*.

There are in all ninety delegates, representing Germany, France, Belgium, Bohemia, Austria, Switzerland, Italy, Servia, Russia, England and the United States.

It is very significant that an Anarchist Congress can take place without governmental interference—in fact, without a single policeman at the hall entrance—in a monarchical country. Such a thing were impossible in "free" America. European delegates would find the gates of Columbia closed to them. O for the glory of our free country!

EMMA GOLDMAN.

Amsterdam, Aug. 26, 1907.

THE McKINLEY MONUMENT

BUFFALO now has a McKinley statue. The unveiling has been characterized as a "national event," participated in by "the whole Nation," which has not yet recovered from the alleged great loss it had sustained through the shot of Czolgosz.

Our Republic has grown very unrepublican. The country our forefathers had in mind was to be the land of a free people, enjoying equality. To-day we are ruled by Cæsars and Crœsuses who have long since abolished the simple republican virtues. Of the old Republic nothing remains but the name; its essence is a plutocracy.

And the people? They are exploited and oppressed—in the name of the people. Their bondage is skilfully veiled by an appearance of independence and liberty. Modern governmental policy consists in hypnotizing the enslaved masses into the belief that they are sovereigns.

That is the character of our democracy. Democracy and Republicanism are twins representing the most refined political method of masking our social and economic bondage. Democracy is the triumph of the deception practiced upon the people; the web is spun so finely that the ordinary man fails to see its meshes.

It is not very difficult to arouse a people against a Nero. Yet what titanic efforts are required to convince the citizen that his paper sovereignty is but the rope with which his masters strangle his independence and the Nation's prosperity!

If the Nation and the people are identical, what interest have the millions of America in a McKinley monument? But if the money kings, usurers, gamblers and canned meat patriots constitute the Nation, then it has reason indeed to glorify McKinley: Was he not, as Chief Magistrate, their most faithful servant? It was the representative of the money bags that Czolgosz struck down. Let them, then, mourn his death, for they may truthfully say that in McKinley they lost an able and zealous protector. *They* have reason to mourn, to be grateful and to build monuments, to honor the memory of their good servant.

But the Nation, the people? Have *they* anything to be grateful for to McKinley? Has he ever championed *their* interests? Was he *their* President? Was he not ever willing and ready to suppress every manifestation of popular dissatisfaction? Was he not constantly at the beck and call of the capitalists, ready to put the army at their disposal whenever the "common" people endeavored to lighten their burden? He could be relied on at all times to aid his plutocratic friends to the extent of his presidential power, to still further oppress and subjugate labor. His régime, dropping all appearances, boldly revealed the conspiracy between State and Capital, for their mutual aggrandizement at the expense of the working masses. McKinley's mission consisted in the endeavor to remove the last barriers that stood in the way of the mopolists' complete triumph. And though such policy meant the life-blood of hundreds of thousands, did he care? Was he moved by the cries of the orphans and the tears of the widows, those countless

victims of King Greed, whose untiring and faithful servant he was?

The McKinley monument marks the final evolution of the Jeffersonian Republic into an imperialistic plutocracy. It symbolizes political corruption, judicial venality and a colonial policy of brutal violence, oppression and exploitation, as practiced on the Filipinos. It characterizes the greed for markets, land robbery and the worst commercial instincts that the McKinley régime fostered and encouraged. It represents Mammon, upon whose altar are daily sacrificed countless men, women and children, whose blood is shed for the greater glory of our Christian civilization. In fine, the McKinley monument is the symbol of Imperialism—the mailed fist of capitalism—whose mission it is to strangle independence and aid capitalistic exploitation at home and abroad.

The Buffalo monument is an insult to the American proletariat. The workingman who still retains a spark of manhood must turn his back upon this symbol of his shame and degradation.

The future historian, if free from prejudice and plutocratic influence, will stamp McKinley as the pliant tool of trusts and monopolists.

To-day the deluded still cry: "The King is dead! Curses upon his murderer!" But greater and more lasting than Cæsar's fame is the beloved memory of Brutus.

* * *

ENOUGH OF ILLUSIONS!

By Peter Kropotkin.

THE dismissal of the second Duma terminated the first period of the Russian Revolution, the Period of Illusions. These illusions were born when Nicholas II., appalled by the general strike of October, 1905, issued a manifesto promising to convoke the representatives of the people and to rule with their aid.

Everyone clearly recollects the circumstances under which these concessions were wrested. Industrial, commercial and administrative activities came to a sudden stop. Neither revolutionists, nor political parties in-

stigated and organized this grand manifestation of the people's will. It originated in Moscow and rapidly spread over entire Russia, like those great elemental popular movements that occasionally seize upon millions, making them act in the same direction, with amazing unanimity, thereby performing miracles.

Mills and factories were closed, railroad traffic was interrupted; food products accumulated in huge masses on way-stations and could not reach the towns where the populace were starving. Darkness and silence of the grave struck terror into the hearts of the rulers who were ignorant of the happenings in the interior, as the strike had extended to the postal and telegraph service.

It was animal fear for himself and his own that forced Nicholas II. to yield to Witte's exhortations and convoke the Duma. It was terror before the throng of 300,000 invading the streets of St. Petersburg, and preparing to storm the prisons, that compelled him to concede an amnesty.

It would seem that no faith should have been placed in the faint traces of constitutional liberties thus extorted. The experience of history, especially that of '48, has shown that constitutions granted from above were worthless, unless a substantial victory, won by the spilling of blood, converted the paper concessions into actual gains, and unless the people themselves widened their rights by commencing, of their own accord, a reconstruction along the lines of local autonomy.

The rulers, who had submitted on the spur of the moment, in such cases have usually allowed the heat and triumph of the people to subside, meanwhile preparing faithful troops, listing the agitators to be arrested or annihilated, and in a few months have repudiated their promises, and forcibly put down the people in revenge for the fear and humiliations they had to undergo.

Russia had suffered so much during the preceding half-century of hunger and outrage and insolence of her masters; Russian cultured society was so exhausted by the long sanguinary and unequal struggle—that the first surrender of the treacherous Romanoff was hailed as bona fide concession. Russia exultingly ushered in the Era of Liberty.

In a previous article we had pointed out that on the very day the October manifesto was signed, introducing a liberal régime, the wicked and treacherous Nicholas, with his consorts, instituted the secret government of Trepoff in Peterhoff, with the object of counteracting and paralyzing those reforms. In the first days of popular jubilations, when the people believed the Tsar, the gendarmerie, under the guidance of the secret government, hastily issued proclamations inciting to slaughter of Jews and intelligents, despatched its agents to organize pogroms and raids. These agents gathered bands of Hooligans, cut down intelligents in Tver and Tomsk, mowed down men, women and children celebrating the advent of freedom, while Trepoff—the right hand of the Tsar—issued the order "not to spare ammunition" in dispersing popular demonstrations.

The majority divined the source of the pogroms. But our radicals had committed their customary blunder. They were so little informed (and are yet to-day) as to the doings in the ruling circles that this double-faced policy of Nicholas was positively known only seven or eight months later when exposed by Urusoff in the first Duma. Even then, prompted by Russian good nature, men still reiterated that it was not the Tsar's fault, but his advisers'. The Tsar, it was said, was too mild to be crafty. In reality—and it is now becoming a conviction—he is too malicious not to be treacherous.

While the secret government of Peterhof was thus organizing pogroms and massacres, and turning loose upon the peasantry hordes of Cossacks brutalized in their police service, our radicals and Socialists had their dreams of "parliament," forming parliamentary parties, with their inevitable intrigues and factional dissensions, and imagined themselves in possession of the constitutional procedure that had taken England centuries to form.

The outlying provinces alone understood that, utilizing the discomfiture of the government caught unawares, it was necessary to rise at once, and, without consulting the abortive "autocratic constitution," to pull down the local institutions which are the mainstay of the government over the entire extent of Russia. Such risings broke out in Livonia, Guria, Western Grusia, and on the

East-Siberian railway. The Gurians and Letts set a fine example of a popular insurrection: their first step was to establish local revolutionary autonomy.

Unfortunately these revolts found no support either from their neighbors, or from Central Russia and Poland. And even where the villages revolted in Central Russia they were not sustained by the cities and towns. Russia did not do what was done in July, 1789, when the insurgent town populaces of Eastern France abolished the crumbling-down municipalities, and, acting from below, began with the organization of districts, ordering the town affairs without waiting for royal or parliamentary laws. Even the Moscow rising did not awaken active aid in the masses and failed to put forth the usual revolutionary expedient—an autonomous municipal commune.

Diligent inculcation of German ideals of imperial centralization, of party discipline, into the minds of Russian revolutionists bore fruit. Our revolutionaries heroically joined in the struggle, but failed to produce revolutionary mottoes. Even if they were vaguely surmised there was no one to formulate them definitely.

The individual revolts were crushed. Trains carrying the Semenoff regiment were allowed to pass to Moscow while the revolutionaries were awaiting "directions" from some source. The punitive detachment led by Meller-Zokomelsky left Cheliabinsk and reached Chita unmolested: in spite of the strike on the Siberian railway it was permitted to proceed! The brutal inroads of Orloff raged in the Baltic provinces, but the Letts could elicit no help from the West and Poland. Guria was laid waste, and wherever the Russian peasants stirred the Cossacks beat them down with a ferocity like that of the Terrible Ivan's bodyguard.

In the meantime the naïve—foolishly naïve—faith in the Duma was still alive. Not that the Duma was regarded as a check to arbitrariness, or capable in its narrow sphere of curbing the zeal of the Peterhofers. O, no! The Duma was looked upon as the future citadel of legality. Why? "Because," reiterated our simple-minded intelligents, "autocracy cannot subsist without a loan, and foreign bankers will lend no money without the Duma's sanction." This was asserted at a time when

the French and even the English governments were backing a new loan, not without guarantees to be sure, for it was desired to draw Russia into a contemplated conflict with Germany.*

Even the dismissal of the first Duma and the drumhead courts-martial did not sober our simple-hearted politicians. They still believed in the magic power of the Duma and in the possibility of gaining a constitution through it. The character of the labors of both Dumas shows this.

There are words—"winged words"—that travel around the earth, inspire people, steel them to fight, to brave death. If the Duma did not pass a solitary law tending to renovate life, one might at least expect to hear such words. In a revolutionary epoch, when destructive work precedes constructive efforts, bursts of enthusiasm possess marvelous power. Words, mottoes, are mightier than a passed law, for the latter is sure to be a compromise between the spirit of the Future and the decayed Past.

The Versailles House of 1789 lived in unison with Paris; they reacted upon each other. The poor of Paris would not have revolted on the 14th of July had not the Third Estate, three weeks before, uttered its pledge not to disperse until the entire order of things was altered. What if this oath were theatrical; what if, as we now know, had not Paris risen, the deputies would have meekly departed, as did our Duma. Those were words, but they were words that inspired France, inspired the world. And when the House formulated and announced "The Rights of Man," the revolutionary shock of the new Era thrilled the world.

Similarly we know now that the French King would have vetoed any law about the alienation, even with recompense, of the landlords' feudal rights; moreover, the House itself (like our cadets) would not have passed it. What of that? Nevertheless, the House uttered a mighty summons in the first article of the declaration of prin-

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* As if Turkey, ten times bankrupt, did not procure new loans, even for war purposes. As if the Western bankers do not exert themselves to reduce as many countries as possible to the condition of Greece and Egypt, wherein the bankers' trust, as a guarantee of debts, seize upon state revenues or state properties. As if the Russian looters would scruple to pawn state railways, mines, the liquor monopoly, etc.

ciples on the 4th of August: "Feudal rights abolished!" In reality, it was mere verbal fireworks, but the peasants, consciously confounding declaration with law, refused to pay all feudal dues.

No doubt, those were mere words, but they stirred revolutions.

Finally, there was more than mere words, for, availing themselves of the government's perplexity, the French deputies boldly attacked the antiquated local institutions, substituting for the squires and magistrates communal and urban municipalities, which subsequently became the bulwarks of the revolution.

"Different times, different conditions," we are told. Indisputably so. But the illusions precluded a clear realization of the actual conditions in Russia. Our deputies and politicians were so hypnotized by the very words "popular representatives," and so far underestimated the strength of the old régime that no one asked the pertinent question: "What must the Russian revolution be?" However, not only the believers in the magic power of the Duma were misguided. Our Anarchist comrades erred in assuming that the heroic efforts of a group of individuals would suffice to demolish the fortress of the old order reared by the centuries. Thousands of heroic exploits were performed, thousands of heroes perished, but the old régime has survived and still does its work of crushing the young and vigorous.

Yes, the era of illusions has terminated. The first attack is repulsed. The second attack should be prepared on a broader basis and with a fuller understanding of the foe's strength. There can be no revolution without the participation of the masses, and all efforts should be directed toward rousing the people who alone are capable of paralyzing the armies of the old world and capturing its strongholds.

We must forge ahead with this work in every part, nook, and corner of Russia. Enough of illusions, enough of reliance on the Duma or on a handful of heroic redeemers! It is necessary to put the masses forward directly for the great work of general reconstruction. But the masses will enter the struggle only in the name of their direct fundamental needs.

The land—to the tiller; the factories, mills, railways—to the worker; everywhere, a free revolutionary commune working out its own salvation at home, not through representatives or officials in St. Petersburg.

Such should be the motive of the second period of the revolution upon which Russia is entering.

* * *

THE PALE WORKER

By MORRIS ROSENFELD.

Lo! yonder I see the pale worker,
Stitch, stitch, without pause, without stay,
Since first I remember him, stitching,
And paler and weaker each day.

The slow months roll on in their courses,
The years are as days that have been,
And still the pale worker, bent double,
Fights hard with the cruel machine.

I stand and I gaze on his features,
On his face with the sweat and the soil,
Ah! it is not the strength of the body,
'Tis the spirit that spurs him to toil.

But from dawn till the sunset and darkness,
The tear-drops fall heavy and slow,
Till the seams of the cloth he is stitching
Are wet with the vintage of woe.

I pray you, how long must he drive it,
This wheel that is red for a sign?
Can you reckon the years of his bondage,
And the end—that grim secret—divine?

Too hard are such questions to answer,
But this I am bold to declare—
When Death shall have slain the pale worker,
Another will sit in his chair.

AN INTERVIEW WITH GOD

By MARGARET GRANT.

IT was an inspiration. I am sure any fair-minded person would call it so. Of course the thing has been done before: Buddha did it, and Jesus and Mahomet and Dowie and Moses and—oh! several persons at one time and another; but for the most part they had selfish ends to promote. It was not so with me. I had some serious questions of general public interest to ask of the Almighty one. It is true that I offered the manuscript to various magazines, but that was not for the money I would get from it. I may say that I would have had no trouble in disposing of it, only that I refused to submit to the condition which all of the magazines attached to acceptance, which was that I should have the proofs revised by Mr. Roosevelt. My invariable answer was, No. I am prepared to be made a member of the Liars' Club, but I will not run the risk of having my manuscript revised by a rival of the personage interviewed. It would not be fair to either of us. Besides, consider the confusion that would result; the reader couldn't tell from either matter or manner which were the words of the one and which of the other.

I am not what you would call a strictly orthodox religious person, myself, but my friend, Sarah Warner, is. She knows to a nicety what others ought to do, she is very severe in her judgments, she always refers to Sunday as the Sabbath, and her infallible rule of wrong conduct is doing what she wouldn't do. You can understand then why I went to her for help.

"Sarah," I said, sitting down near her in the room where she was sewing, "I want to have a talk with God, and I don't know just how to go about it. You know I haven't been on the same terms with him that you have, but I do want to talk to him."

"Margaret," said she, rolling her eyes upward as she finished her stitch, "you make me very happy. Go to your closet and there commune."

"Oh! my closet! But, Sarah, my closet is so small and stuffy that for a long interview I don't think I could stand it. May I use yours?"

"Certainly, if you wish," she answered, staring at me a little.

"And you do think a closet is the place?" I asked.

"It is always recommended," she answered with a superior smile. "It was there I found Him."

She said it with the air of having cornered Him there. But that was like Sarah; she always spoke of God as my God, for all the world as if he were personal to her. She spoke of Henry in the same way: my husband. It was always a surprise to me that she consented to use the masculine pronoun in connection with her deity. Sarah is what is known as a strong character. Her personal convictions are to her general truths.

Of course I said nothing like this to her, but went into her closet, first putting my hat on, naturally enough, having read so much in the papers about the impropriety of going where God was with a hat off; though I confess I had no notion of why God should be offended with a woman's bare head and not with a man's. But if I run on like this I shall never come to the interview. As it is I shall have to condense it, for, as the editor says, there is only so much space to fill.

"Almighty God!" I began, remembering very well the invocatory form of address, "I wish a few words with you about some important matters, and would like you to come here. If you please, I don't care for the burning-bush idea, or for the still, small voice."

"All right, Margaret! I'm here," came the answer with a suddenness that I will admit brought my heart into my mouth; "but I want to say that the still, small voice is the peculiar property of Conscience, though what's the use of a voice that is still all the time, I don't know. As for the burning bush, either Moses saw things red that morning, or it was a pure fabrication. Now, what is it you want to know? Hurry, please, for there's going to be a massacre in my name over in Russia somewhere, and I want to be there."

"Why, I thought you were everywhere at once," I cried.

"Did you? Well, go on thinking so; it may scare you into doing what your ruling class wishes. What do you want to know? Hurry, please!"

"You'll get me all flustered if you hurry me," I re-

monstrated. "Let me see! I'd like to know who's right in that nature writer controversy, Long or Roosevelt?"

"What do you mean by putting Long before Roosevelt? Don't do it again. I won't meddle in that affair, won't give an opinion. It wouldn't be according to etiquette for me to criticise Theodore. Anything else?"

This wasn't the leisurely interview I had counted on, and I was at my wits' end to know what to say; so I fired off my questions haphazard.

"Did you really give those coal mines to Mr. Baer?"

"Don't you know the old adage? God helps him who helps himself. Of course we're in partnership. The rich need me as much as I need them."

"But it's the poor who support the churches," I objected.

"They support the rich, too, don't they? Go on! What else?"

"What is the sex of the angels?"

"Don't you know there is no marrying or giving in marriage in Heaven?"

"Yes, but I thought that might mean free love."

"Free love? Not if I can help it. Why, the churches would go to pieces in a minute if they didn't have the marriage superstition so firmly fixed in people's minds. You can say for me that angels are neuter."

"I don't want to seem to argue the matter," I said humbly, "but it seems to me that that statement doesn't quite fit with the story about the Holy Ghost and Joseph's wife. You know——"

"There! there! that will do! you've said enough! Let me tell you that ever since that episode the Holy Ghost has lost standing in Heaven. The thing was badly managed, or it would never have got out. Something else, please! And hurry!"

"I'd like to know something about Mr. Comstock. Is he doing your work the way you want it done?"

"To be frank with you, I don't know what to say. I can see that the Devil helps the man all he can, but on the other hand the priests tell me that they must keep folks in ignorance or their whole scheme will go to pieces. I wash my hands of it. What next?"

"Who will be our next President?"

"That's out of my department. Ask Theodore. He sometimes encroaches on my territory, but I'll play fair. No, it's no use to ask any more questions; see, it is three o'clock, and allowing for difference in time, that massacre is due, and I ought to be there. Sorry, but I must go."

And I was alone.

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INTERNATIONAL NOTES

By SLOVAK.

ENGLAND.

Recently an "Industrial Union of Direct Actionists" has been formed in London, comprising a federation of unions who are adherents of the principle of direct action and the general strike. It is reported that a number of unions have asked for admission to the new organization, which stands upon the basis of modern revolutionary syndicalism. The syndicalist weekly, *Voice of Labour,* is publishing their appeals.

Socialist papers report the election of the first Marxist, a certain Mr. Grayson, to the Lower House. The great event happened July 22d. Is it not a terrible blow to capitalism?!

GERMANY.

The publishers of our contemporary *Revolutionär,* Berlin, had to dismiss their printer, Arthur Donat, because, in true Pinkerton style, he has betrayed the comrades by furnishing proofs and first copies of the paper to the police department of Berlin.

The Anarco-Socialist Dr. Friedeberg, who, having been an active member of the Social-Democratic party and a member of the municipal council of the city of Berlin, elected on the Socialist ticket, has evolved away from the pure and simple political propaganda and is now on trial, facing expulsion from the party. In a recent public meeting he stated his position with regard to the charges brought against him; his opponents give him credit for his sincerity and good faith, but claim that his defence proves him guilty of the charge of heresy; a committee

of arbitration, composed of opponents, is in charge of the judiciary farce to decide his elimination.

At the same time the German government is charging our comrade with high treason for allowing his preface to the German translation of Hervé's anti-militaristic pamphlet, "The Fatherland of the Rich," to be printed in Switzerland. Hervé calls upon the soldiers of France to refuse to serve, should they be called to arms against Germany. To demoralize an enemy is high treason in Germany, according to this judicial gem of logic. Why does he not come to America to get decorated like our "brave" General Funston, the "honorable" hero and treacherous kidnapper of Aguinaldo?!

A stone lion, representing civic manhood, and for over 30 years undisturbed on a war memorial in Bieberich, has been officially castrated under the pressure of the German Comstocks. This castrated lion is the only fit symbol for desirable emasculated citizenship.

FRANCE.

Recently comrade Louis Matha was arrested, the police claiming to have found a lot of counterfeit money in the office of *Le Libertaire*, edited by Matha. Proofs are coming to light, however, which show that the whole matter is a police plot, its object being to keep Matha in prison during the visit of the kings of England, Norway and Denmark, and to ruin *Le Libertaire*. Incidentally, the communistic colony of Aiglemont is also to be drawn into the police plot, as a pretext for its forcible disbanding by the government. The imprisoned comrades will benefit by the blind zeal of their brutal persecutors, for the public conscience has been aroused by the conspiracy being unmasked.

BELGIUM.

The anti-syndicalist prosecutions in France are readily aped by Belgium of Cleopold's grace. The death of a scab at the hands of a man, who confessed to the act, served as a pretext for the mine owners to prosecute 15 active syndicalists, and to condemn the confessed murderer to 15 years of forced labor; while the president of the miners' federation and a member of the executive committee were sentenced to 20 years each for

having been the "spiritual cause" of the deed; and a total of 115 years was imposed upon nine of the prosecuted syndicalists. Serious lack of solidarity on the part of labor is charged in this struggle, allowing the prosecution to make the most of it against the victims of mine owners' wrath, because the miners' union is not affiliated with the party or the conservative unions, but stands for direct action.

The independent trades unions of Belgium, who refuse to be under the guardianship of the Socialist party and desire the trades union movement of Belgium to be of the same character as that of France, independent from political parties, met in convention on June 16th, some sixty delegates representing a membership of 12,000, to work out the organization of the Confederation Syndicale Belge, similar to the Confederation Generale du Travail of France.

L'Action Directe, the syndicalist organ of Belgium, has been transferred from Gilly to Liege. Address: Henry Fuss-Amoré, Herstal, or Leon Joassin, 85, rue Basse-Wez, Liege, Belgium.

ITALY.

Il Pensiero, of Rome, brings interesting reports of the Italian Anarchist Congress, held June 16th to 20th, at Rome. One of these reports defines the attitude of the Communist Anarchists towards Max Stirner's individualism. A recent issue of *Il Pensiero* gave a fine analysis of the undercurrents and fermentation going on in the minds of many of the adherents of the movement of more sentimental or narrowing doctrinarian and sectarian character; the measles and whooping cough of our young movement, often rendering the work tedious and sterile. Similar significant articles have recently appeared in our contemporaries of France and Holland. The disease is not quite unknown in this country, either.

Our contemporary further publishes other reports submitted to the Italian Anarchist Congress and the resolutions passed, defining the attitude of the Anarchist movement towards religion, the young people, Socialism, Stirner's individualism, anti-militarism, masonry, individual and collective action, the International Anarchist Congress at Amsterdam, and the press.

The Italian press has much to say about the anti-

clerical movement, dwelling upon riots, disturbed processions and stoned prelates. It forgets to mention, however, that at the bottom of these recent militant demonstrations of a hitherto faithful people is the discovery of horrible wholesale manifestations of sexual degeneracy in the ranks of the "celibate" Catholic clergy, victimizing little children and syphilizing little tots five years old, which forced the government to suspend the Order of the Salesian monks and nuns and to arrest the sanctimonious officers of the Order, the hypocritical hyenas whose foul lust and greed were devouring little children.

In view of the fact that prisons, jails and penitentiaries are built to keep the people in subjection, the bricklayers and other building trades of the city of Mantoa have gone on a strike when ordered to build prison extensions; bad enough that they have to build mansions for their masters, but they draw the line at jails for themselves. The workingmen of Italy are congratulating the strikers on this novel expression of class-consciousness.

The anti-militaristic propaganda is bringing good results, according to figures published by the ministry of war. In the year 1901 there were about 600 deserters; in 1906 the figures rose to 6,771; and, besides that, not less than 39,894 refused to show up for recruiting.

Some 40,000 agricultural workers in 14 communities of the provinces of Ferrara and Copparese are on strike, supported by sympathetic strikes in the province of Rovigo and a general strike in Venice. Partial local concessions have already been won, in spite of 12,000 troups called out by the government to support the landowners.

ROUMANIA.

The courts-martial of Bukarest have condemned fifty-eight soldiers to lifelong penal servitude for the "crime" of having refused to shoot upon their fathers and mothers during the recent agrarian revolt. God save the king!

The government is taking advantage of the agrarian disorders to crush the Socialist and the trades union movement by persecutions. Under pretext of administrative irregularities the books and funds of organized labor of Galatz were seized by the government, and labor has answered with a general strike in this important city of the kingdom.

BRITISH INDIA.

The police courts of Calcutta sentenced the editor of a native paper, *Ingantar* (The New Time), to one year hard labor for having advocated an armed revolution. The sentence has embittered the population. Many natives in Eastern Bengal have been sentenced for acts tending towards boycotting and destroying British goods, as advocated by the so-called National Volunteers.

The government of Nepal has suppressed three native papers for inciting the people against the British, and all the Bengali and other foreigners in the government employ have been warned not to enter in relations with the Hindoo agitators.

PERSIA.

Even far-away Persia is using the general strike as a weapon against privileged class parliament and grafting officials. There has been a general strike in Ispahan, the former capital of the empire, to enforce the recall of the reactionary and criminal governor general Masud Mirza. Troops were sent to suppress the movement. The traveling Shahs are not the only ones to profit by Western lessons.

PERU.

Strikes of weavers in American factories in Lima, Calera and Victoria; of railroad workers of Trujillo; of stevedores in Callao, have ended mostly favorably for labor, in spite of governmental atrocities, arrests of Socialist speakers, and the arrogance of Yankee foremen and employers, thanks to the solidarity of all Peruvian labor. Higher wages, regular pay and better sanitary conditions were the demands, most of which were won.

ARGENTINE.

A unity convention of organized labor in the economic field, as represented in the political centralistic federation and the non-political association, both strong bodies fighting in solidarity in the economic field though disagreeing in politics, resulted in a marked victory of the libertarian wing and the withdrawal of the minority charging unfairness in the procedure. May the case be so or not, the facts tally with similar tendencies in organized labor in this and other countries.

TO OUR COMRADES

Friends:—We are living at a time of great social unrest. The simple democracy of former days has been changed by capitalism into a despotic imperialism. The people feel their bondage growing daily more unendurable, but fail as yet to understand the cause or the cure.

Social quacks and professional politicians are busy exploiting popular dissatisfaction for their personal aggrandizement; they seek to pacify the people by palliatives, in order to continue safely riding on their backs.

Dissatisfaction with existing conditions is findng its strongest expression among the working class. The man of toil begins to understand that there is no hope for a radical change under the capitalist régime. He is gradually realizing that the methods heretofore employed by labor are ineffectual and not designed to improve his economic position. He is embittered by the regularity of his defeats. He is fast losing confidence in his so-called leaders, in whom he is beginning to see the friends of labor's enemies.

Comrades! Let us not fail to properly appreciate this crucial period in the history of American labor, and let us prove our appreciation *actively*. We have an all-important work before us. It is for us, as Anarchists, to point out to the workingman the real cause of his dissatisfaction, misery and oppression; to impress upon him the inefficiency of trades unionism, pure and simple; to convince him of the dangerous uselessness of parliamentary methods. We must discover to him his natural weapons and the powerful means at hand to make himself free; we must point out to him the methods so successfully being used by his European brothers: the revolutionary tactics whose final destiny it is to free labor from all exploitation and oppression, and usher in a free society; the modern, efficient weapons of direct action and general strike.

The best medium for introducing these battle methods to the workingman is a weekly revolutionary paper. Our magazine, *Mother Earth*, is doing excellent work. But it is a monthly, and, as such, it must deal with the various manifestations of our social life; it cannot devote itself exclusively to one particular phase. The pro-

jected weekly, however, is to deal entirely with labor, its battles, hopes and aspirations.

To *Mother Earth*, whose work is theoretical, literary and educational, must be added a practical weekly, a fighting champion of revolutionary labor.

We must carry our ideas to the men that toil.

Therefore we appeal to you, comrades. If you have the cause of Anarchism seriously at heart; if you want the workingmen to learn our ideas; if you realize how all-important is the propaganda of direct action and the general strike, then come to our aid by financing the project of a weekly revolutionary paper.

Comrades! It is for you to decide whether we, as Anarchists, should take our stand in the midst of throbbing life or remain on the philosophic by-ways.

ALEXANDER BERKMAN.
HARRY KELLY.
VOLTAIRINE DE CLEYRE.
EMMA GOLDMAN.
HIPPOLYTE HAVEL.
GEORGE BAUER.

P. S.—The comrades are urgently requested to act without delay. For obvious reasons it were desirable to begin the publication of the weekly paper on the 11th of November. All communications and contributions for this purpose should be addressed to Alexander Berkman, Box 47, Station D, New York.

* * *

NOTE

We take great pleasure in informing our readers that with the next issue MOTHER EARTH will again appear in 64 pages.

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LETTER BOX

A. C.—Do you remember Kriloff's fable of the diminutive doggie barking furiously at the elephant? "Why do you, insignificant thing, bark at the elephant?" queried a friendly canine. "Oh, if people see me attack such a big fellow, they will think me, too, of some consequence," was the reply.

Kriloff, no doubt, had in mind the editor of that obscure little new German publication which is indulging in an indirect denunciation to the police of our absent comrades. 'Tis an aggravated case of envy and jealousy. They are beneath our notice.

A. B.

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